

HEAD START BODY START  
 NATIONAL CENTER FOR PHYSICAL  
 DEVELOPMENT AND  
 OUTDOOR PLAY



*The Benefits of Risk:*

How Giving Our Children More Freedom  
 Helps Them Grow




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## Meet the Speaker

- ◆ Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
- ◆ Collaborative Divorce advocate and coach
- ◆ Play therapy specialist
- ◆ Published writer
- ◆ Parent
- ◆ Speaker



Miven Booth Trageser,  
 M.A. , MFT

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Childhood is FUN

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### Or Is It?




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Chime In:

What does it feel like to see warning labels and danger signs all around you?

How do you imagine it is for kids?



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What is the impact of our caution?

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Chime in:



What makes an experience fun?  
What words come to mind?

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How does RISK relate to FUN?

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# What is risk?

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What are you aware of feeling in your body right now?

## RISK

n. *chance of something going wrong*; the danger that injury, damage, or loss will occur  
 danger opportunity prospect, accident unknown crisis  
 venture hazard, jeopardy chance wager, possibility, peril, somebody or something likely to cause injury, damage, or loss  
 exposure, fortune, gamble, hazard, adventure, liability,  
 openness, plunge,  
 shot in the dark, speculation, luck uncertainty  
 v. *to take a chance*, brave, confront dare, defy,  
 encounter, endanger, face, hang by a thread, hazard, imperil,  
jeopardize, leap before looking,  
 leave to luck, meet, imperil, play with fire, plunge, put in jeopardy,  
 skate on thin ice, tackle, take a plunge, take on, venture, wager

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They are actually very safe.

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But we don't believe it.



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What do adults worry about most?



- kidnapping
- school shootings
- terrorist attacks
- dangerous strangers
- online predators

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### Poll

What kills the most 1-4 yr olds in the U.S.?

- a. car accidents
- b. drowning
- c. pedestrian accidents
- d. suffocation
- e. fires
- f. homicide



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Three Most Dangerous




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By far the most danger is for rural kids in poverty.




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Not these kids who are being worried about the most.




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We idealize the past.

Nostalgia is great...



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But childhood used to look more like this:



Injuries from industrial and farm accidents, disease, poor nutrition, high infant mortality, hard work.

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If kids are safer now,

Why don't we feel safe?



Seven horizontal lines for writing.

We misunderstand the dangers around us

**MISSING**

**CARA VOOGD**  
DRESSED IN:  
PINK JOCKER WITH BLACK PRINTING  
ON  
13 YEARS OF AGE  
021 976 0709

**Doctors Fear Flu-Superbug Combo**  
HOW WILL 2 KIDS IN BOSTON AFTER TAKING 22 LINES LAST YEAR

**Death of a Little Princess**  
THE TRUE STORY OF THE MURDER OF JON BENET RAMSEY  
**CARLTON SMITH**  
New York Times Bestselling Author

Seven horizontal lines for writing.

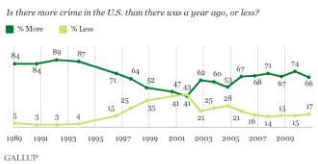
Good news does not stick.

November 18, 2010 [Share](#) [E-mail](#) [Print](#)

**Americans Still Perceive Crime as on the Rise**

Two-thirds say crime increasing in U.S., 49% in their local area

PRINCETON, NJ – Two-thirds of Americans say there is more crime in the United States than there was a year ago, reflecting Americans' general tendency to perceive crime as increasing. Still, the percentage perceiving an increase in crime is below what Gallup measured in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but is higher than the levels from the late 1990s and early 2000s.



Americans are somewhat more positive about the trend in crime in their local area, but still are more

Seven horizontal lines for writing.



It's the brain, stupid.

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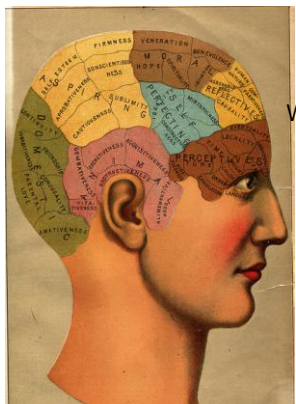
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We have funny wiring

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He sees this.



We see this.

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What might happen?

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An adventure?

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**What do we really want?**

Kids who are:

safe	?	resilient	competent
protected	?	curious	energetic
secure	self-reliant	active	unique
sheltered	strong	creative	resourceful

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**Is this risky?**

Do you want to step in? Now, before anything happens?

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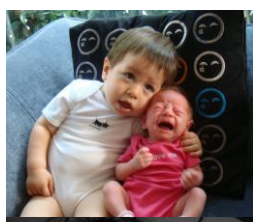
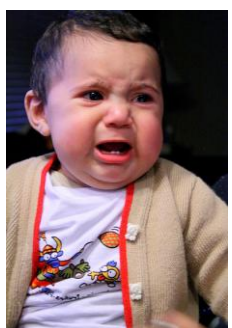
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What do you feel?

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**Poll:**

When a child gets hurt who you are watching, what is the worst aspect of it?

- a. the actual injury to the child
- b. the emotional upset that comes next
- c. guilt or fear about getting blame



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Does this feel scary?

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When is it safe to walk?



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When can you let them run ahead or not hold your hand?

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You can't get to *MASTERY* without experiencing *RISK.*



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The right amount of risk



feels great.

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Though it can feel scary...



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...but it's ok.

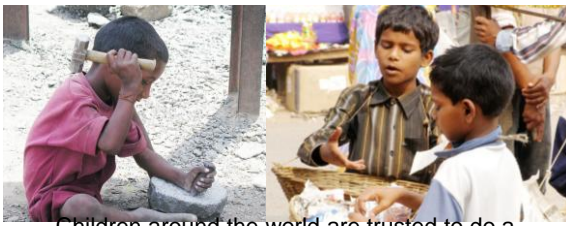


Mastery feels really good.

“Solving her problem or rescuing her gives her the message that the world is a dangerous place that she is not competent enough to handle.”

Magda Gerber,  
Your Self-Confident Baby

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 18 horizontal lines.



Children around the world are trusted to do a lot.




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You can't get to **INDEPENDENCE** without **RISK**.

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Can you set up clear ground rules for her ride, so you both feel safe?

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What is he feeling right now?



Seven horizontal lines for writing.

If you go too far, or get scared...



You just come back.

Seven horizontal lines for writing.

It's all in the repair



which builds secure attachment and resilience.

Seven horizontal lines for writing.

If children are too insulated from risk, they become bored, passive or irritable.



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How do these kids feel?

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Communities  
decide what  
risk is  
acceptable

That's  
US



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<http://www.flickr.com/photos/respres/2492180309/in/gallery-57160984/@N04-72157626639230430/>  
Can we embed this video from Flickr And then discuss Can this be normal? What circumstances allow this?



We can support each other when we discuss risk openly calmly and rationally.

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If we don't, our children pay the price.

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Four Questions to Ask to Stop Helicoptering:

1. What exactly am I worried will happen?
2. How likely is it to happen?
3. Is my child enjoying him/herself right now and feeling capable and independent?
4. Can I wait one minute before stepping in?

Miven Trageser, MFT 310-284-3600  
www.losangeleschildtherapist.com

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Miven Trageser, MFT  
Therapy, Coaching and Consultation

The Healing Power of Play  
www.losangeleschildtherapist.com

miven@trageserMFT@gmail.com 310-284-3600  
www.miventrageser.com CA Lic. # 40113

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**Head Start Body Start**

[www.headstartbodystart.org](http://www.headstartbodystart.org)

Email: [headstartbodystart@aahperd.org](mailto:headstartbodystart@aahperd.org)



@HSBS\_Play

Join the conversation: [www.hsbs-play.ning.com](http://www.hsbs-play.ning.com)

- [www.janetlansbury.com](http://www.janetlansbury.com) R.I.E. principles in action in the lives of parents and kids.
- <http://www.caroltorgan.com/100-top-play-resources/> Now over 200 Amazing Resources
- <http://j.mp/kksRy3> Facebook page: Things Your Parents Let You Do As a Kid That You'd Be Arrested For Now
- <http://freerangekids.wordpress.com/>
- <http://www.ucrdatatool.gov/Search/Crime/State/RunCrimeStatebyState.cfm> FBI statistics on crime.
- [www.miventrageser.com/blog](http://www.miventrageser.com/blog)

# Resources

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